

HOUSE BILL 582 – GREEN JOBS TRAINING PROGRAM

EXHIBIT

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2-17-09

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House Business & Labor Committee members,

We oppose this bill in its current form. We oppose any higher education entity being in this bill but do believe the Tribal colleges, JATCs or non-profits not affiliated with a college should be left in the bill.

Over the last few years there has been a concerted effort by the Montana University and College of Technology systems to duplicate services already provided by joint apprenticeship and training committees by creating pre-apprenticeship programs.

We believe these construction training programs are nothing more than a way to fill seats and charge tuition. The Havre college has a pre-apprenticeship electrician program. This is a two year program with costs between \$17,000 - \$20,000 per year for a total of \$34,000 - \$40,000 debt upon graduation and no job because they still haven't worked the hours necessary to obtain a license. The COT in Butte has a pre-apprenticeship lineman program with a grand total of 1 and possibly 2 people placed into jobs.

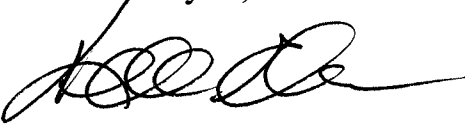
An apprenticeship offered by Union and nonunion programs is an on-the-job program enhanced with classroom training; not a college class enhanced with debt. An apprentice graduating from our 5-year JATC will have grossed approximately \$150,000, is vested in four pension plans and also has full-family health insurance. They have a job and no college debt.

Apprentices earn wages and are able to put those wages to work in their community. These are full-circle training dollars as opposed to tuition dollars. If the University and COT systems are left in this bill, the monies hoarded by them will be spent on developing curriculum, hiring more instructors and many other administrative costs not related to training. Monies sent to Tribal colleges, JATCs and non-profits are able to "hit the ground running" and actually be used to train people for a career.

We may be biased towards our programs but with good reason; we've trained people for decades and this isn't a new inspiration to us. A true training program is a job reality and not a hollow hope with the strings of a college loan attached.

Please remove all Universities, COTs, and Vo-Techs from this bill and we can support it. We trust the Tribes, JATCs and non-profits to train people and not collect tuition.

Thank you,



Keith Allen

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 233